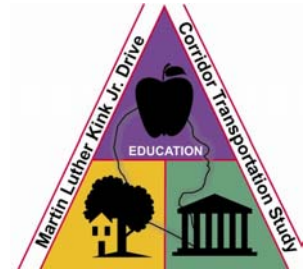


City of Atlanta
Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive Corridor Study
Advisory Committee Meeting
10-14-04
6:30 pm
Adamsville Rec. Center



Attendees:

Garnett Brown (City of Atlanta)	Mignon Allen (Dovetail)
Sara W. Hicks (City of Atlanta)	Kalanos Johnson (WSA)
Flor Velarde (City of Atlanta)	Herman Howard (Turner)
Cheryl King (WSA)	Jack Halpern (Developer)
Andy Fellers (NPU I)	Todd Tillman (ANDP)
Makeda Johnson (NPU L)	Jonathan Wilkins (Dev. Auth)
C.T. Martin (Councilmember)	R.R. Harris (NPU H)
Greg Alexander (Business Owner)	Mary Smith (NPU I)

Meeting Discussion Items:

1. General Overview/Background for Study

Garnett Brown of the City gave introductory remarks:

- Project in the works for 4 years
- MLK area a critical and important area of the city
- We need your help and input to come up with a viable plan

Councilman C.T. Martin Introductory Remarks:

- Make this the best corridor in the city. A good place to live work and play a memorial to Dr. King
- Problems that need to be addressed include:
 - I-285@ MLK
 - I-20 @ MLK
 - MLK @ Hamilton E. Holmes near the curve
 - MLK @ Fairburn
 - MLK @ Lynhurst
- GDOT will be tough to deal with and we want to get their buy in early
- Further discussions needed for the location of the new MARTA Station
- Issue with the location of sound barrier walls in the Fairburn area; problem with Trucks turning over and causing accidents

2. Introduction of City Staff and WSA Team

Garnett asked the City Staff and consultant team to introduce themselves and turns the meeting over to Kalanos Johnson

3. Approach to the Project

Kalanos Johnson discussed the project approach and made the following key points:

- Three distinct areas in the corridor: East- Educational/Universities; Central - Residential; West – Commercial/Industrial/Mixed Use
- Purpose is to look at alternatives/recommendations for the corridor and serve as a legacy to Dr. King
- Consultant Team tasked by City to come up with a plan that is realistic, feasible and implementable – not just sits on a shelf
- Schedule approximately 1 year
- Emphasized the importance of a '3 pronged' approach between the City Staff, the community and the consultant team
- At next week's public workshop we will have a brief Power point slide presentation, maps and various displays to facilitate and interactive discussion on corridor needs, problems and the vision
- For next week's public meeting the community will be asked to provide input with a focus in the areas of land use/urban design, transportation, housing and economic development

4. Discussion of the Roles and Responsibilities of the Advisory Team – Kalanos Johnson

The Team members were referred to the handout that has a list of Committee members and their contact information and roles and responsibilities. These were reviewed with them by Mr. Johnson.

- In response to an offer for questions and comments Mr. Alexander (owner of Cascade Family Skating Rink) asked if the meetings would always be on Thursday. He was told no because we will be flexible in order to accommodate everyone's schedule. He indicated that Thursday was a good day.

5. Discussion of the Public involvement Plan and Summary of Stakeholder Interviews – Mignon Allen

Ms. Allen made the following key points:

- Purpose: To enable the public businesses and stakeholders to receive background technical information in order to provide meaningful input to the study team
- The public involvement plan has 6 key elements
 - Clearly defined purpose and objectives
 - Identification of the affected public and other stakeholder groups
 - Identification of the techniques for engaging the public
 - Education and assistance techniques to facilitate public understanding
 - Measurable actions to demonstrate that the public's input has been heard

- She distributed the comment forms for next week public workshop and requested feedback from the team members. The form solicits feedback for the participants in the five focus areas: land use/urban design transportation, housing and economic development. Forms can be turned in tonight or responses sent via email.
- Thus far two stakeholder interviews have been conducted the key issues identified include:
 - Providing for the needs of the large senior population
 - MARTA Service/stations and development at stations
 - Pedestrian safety and the lack of sidewalks
 - Visual image of the area
 - Land use and urban development/redevelopment

At this point there was a deviation from the agenda and Howard Herman gave a brief overview of the land use/urban design elements along with a prelude of the community dialog session and displays we will be using at next week's meetings. Some of his points were:

- We want to focus on strengths and weaknesses for the corridor as well as the corridor's opportunities & threats
- The need to determine the 'overall vision' for the area and how each element, recommendation or action fits with that vision
- Development of an implementation plan or action plan

Later, Garnett Brown asked that each advisory committee member tell what they feel are the most important issues and concerns.

- **Greg Alexander** (Owner of Cascade Family Skating Rink) – has major investment in the community, interested in the aesthetics/identity of the area, (i.e., what you see and how do you feel about it); we need a defining image and good signage.
- **Andy Fellers** – (30 year resident of the area) - There are more than 3 different segments of the area. The interstates (I-20 and I-285) split up the area and cut through the heart of the community. The cemetery and railroads are constraints. There have been previous studies done (Hamilton E. Homes LCI and the Walkability study). The MARTA extension to Fulton Industrial Blvd. would eliminate much of the blight we see along the corridor. If it [the MARTA extension] comes we will have the kind of community people want. This is a great area to live in and I have been a part of it for 30 years. We are interested in end of the line (MARTA) economic development, the elimination of blight along the Railroad tracks. This is a wonderful and historic community. The Collier Heights area was the first planned African American neighborhood. In this community and Cascade Heights the key is preservation. People in this community vote and participate. Recommended that displays be in a large size so that they can be seen. He requested ad color copy of all the displays to be used at the Public workshop next week.

Action Item: Mr. Fellers would like a copy of the drawings in color on 11x17 for distribution to his NPU -- Herman Howard to provide.

- **Jack Halpern** (Developer) – My family has been doing business in the MLK area for 40 years. I appreciate the sense of community and pride that the people in the neighborhoods continue to display; however I recognize a couple of trends: 1) there is a fair amount of housing being built along the corridor. This is good for Halpern because the traffic counts show people living in proximity to the retail outlets, but we need to see more developments. It is a good neighborhood and convenient. 2) What's hurting is the appearance of vacant lots and/or property that has been abandoned. This makes people not want to live or shop in the area. The crime in the area! The retailers feel this more than others, but if we do not get a handle on this we are going to have a difficult time attracting and keeping businesses -- this is critical to everyone's quality of life.
- **Todd Tillman** – (Atlanta Neighborhood Development Partnership) – They plan on opening Adamsville Place a Senior Housing complex with apartments, condos and Townhouses in November of this year. He is concerned with improving the streetscape and getting more retail uses and variety.
- **Jonathan Wilkins (Atlanta Development Authority)** – They are charged with providing infrastructure financing through bonding. He thinks the plan should not be just good ideas but have a feasible implementation plan.
- **Mary Smith** – Florida Heights/Westlake and Anderson areas - concerned with the dangerous curve. It needs to be fixed. There are a lot of accidents there. They are also focused on the preservation of single family homes. There is a lot of elderly living in the area. The I-20 exit to MLK is very dangerous-a lot of accidents.
- **Councilman C. T. Martin** – We have asked several of the apartment complexes to pool their resources and have a roving security force to stop the drugs from coming in. Our community has 7 Drug Trade centers (so termed by the Police and set up by dealers using their cell phones to direct customers to a certain location to pick up drugs). We are making progress by pressuring area businesses to clean up the appearance of their properties. Mr. Halpern is looking for something to go into the old Winn Dixie Store. We have a problem with the apartments (next door?) because all of the people from another housing project were relocated there. It is important that we get buy in from the Mayor and the at large council people. MLK used to be the most appreciated street other than Auburn Avenue. I am not going to let it look like Simpson Street, Bankhead Highway or Lowery Street
- **Makeda Johnson** - MLK/Vine City area has some great structures and landmarks that we would like to see preserved. A grocery store was needed and the area is underserved by retail and recreational facilities.

- **Reva Harris** - We need to not let our dollars go out of our community and support those businesses that support the community. We have formed a partnership with Mr. Alexander. It was a pleasure meeting with the WSA team earlier this week -- I feel very hopeful. We are tired of spending our dollars outside of the neighborhood so we are meeting with all of the businesses along MLK corridor to let them know we appreciate them working with NPU H.

There were no additional comments or questions, and the meeting ending at approximately 8:10 pm. The next meeting for the Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive Corridor Study (first public meeting) will be on October 21st at 6:30 pm at the Adamsville Recreation Center.